AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

Replacement Formal Drawing for Figure 1 has been filed concurrently.

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are requested.

Initially, a replacement formal drawing has been provided for Figure 1 so as to label this figure as --Prior Art--.

The specification and abstract have been reviewed and revised to make editorial changes thereto and generally improve the form thereof, and a substitute specification and abstract are provided. No new matter has been added by the substitute specification and abstract.

By the current Amendment, claims 1-36 have been cancelled and claims 37-70 have been added. With regard to new claims 37-70, claims 37 - 42, 52 - 59, 69 and 70 correspond to the elected species. Please note that new independent claims 37 and 54 are related to one another as combination-subcombination (as were former claims 1 and 19), which are not restrictable from each other because combination claim 54 requires the incombustible withdrawing system as recited in claim 37.

The instant invention pertains to an incombustible withdrawing system and a fluidized-bed furnace system including this incombustible withdrawing system. Such a withdrawing system and furnace system are generally known in the art but suffer from drawbacks as expressed on pages 1-3 of the original specification. Applicants have addressed and resolved these drawbacks by providing a unique incombustible withdrawing system and fluidized-bed furnace system including this incombustible withdrawing system. New claim 37 is believed to be representative of the inventive incombustible withdrawing system, and new claim 54 is believed to be representative of the fluidized-bed furnace system including this incombustible withdrawing system.

In the Office Action mailed March 9, 2005: claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ohshita et al.; claims 1-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Klaschka; and claims 1 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Abdulally. Newly presented independent claims 37 and 54 are believed to be allowable over these references for the following reasons.

New claims 37 and 54 differ from former claims 1 and 19, respectively, by requiring that the incombustible withdrawing system includes, in addition to a mixture delivery path, a fluidized-bed separating chamber, a return passage and an incombustible discharge passage,

> **a conveyor in said mixture delivery path to deliver the mixture from the bottom of the fluidized-bed furnace to said fluidized-bed separating chamber**.

An incombustible withdrawing system including such a conveyor in the mixture delivery path is not taught or suggested by any of the references relied upon by the Examiner.

In this regard, in relying on Ohshita et al. to reject claim 1, the Examiner equated discharge opening 4 in Figure 1 to the claimed mixture delivery path; however, no conveyor is in this portion. While Ohshita et al. does disclose a conveyor 18, this conveyor is downstream of mixture delivery path 4 and thus is not therein, and element 19 in Ohshita et al. is a sieve and is not a fluidized-bed separating chamber. Thus, the incombustible discharge conveyer 18 of Ohshita et al. does not correspond to conveyer as required by each of claims 37 and 54. Accordingly, claims 37 and 54 are not anticipated by Ohshita et al.

In relying on Klaschka to reject claim 1, the Examiner equated ash trough 21 to the claimed mixture delivery path; however, no conveyor is in this portion. Accordingly, claims 37 and 54 are not anticipated by Klaschka.

And, in relying on Abdulally to reject claim 1, the Examiner equated duct 78 to the claimed mixture delivery path; however, no conveyor is in this duct. Additionally, if a fluidized medium is to be returned through vent duct 74 to furnace section 12, then a gas supplied to stripper-cooler 46 flows back to the furnace section 12 through sloping duct 78, and thus, the fluidized bed reactor of Abdulally is problematic in practical use. In contrast thereto, since an incombustible withdrawing system as recited in claims 37 and 54 has a conveyer disposed in the mixture delivery path to deliver a mixture from the bottom of the fluidized-bed furnace to the fluidized-bed separating chamber, the mixture is forcibly delivered to the fluidized-bed separating chamber by the conveyer so as to

prevent a fluidizing gas from flowing back to the fluidized-bed furnace. Accordingly, claims 37 and 54 are not anticipated by Abdulally.

In conclusion, because none of the references relied upon by the Examiner teach or suggest a conveyor in a mixture delivery path that is to deliver a mixture from the bottom of a fluidized-bed furnace to a fluidized-bed separating chamber, claims 37 and 54 are allowable over the references relied upon by the Examiner either taken alone or in combination. Thus, claims 37-70 are allowable.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and an early Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

If after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner believes that any issues remain which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative by telephone to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Norihisa MIYOSHI et al.

By: Joseph M. Gorski

Joseph M. Gorski
Registration No. 46,500
Attorney for Applicants

JMG/edg
Washington, D.C. 20006-1021
Telephone (202) 721-8200
Facsimile (202) 721-8250
June 9, 2005